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**Book review: Jay H. Jasanoff, The Prehistory of the Balto-Slavic Accent  
[Brill's Studies in Indo-European Languages Linguistics, Volume 17] (Brill  
2017), 268 pp**

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## Book Reviews

**Jay H. Jasanoff**, *The Prehistory of the Balto-Slavic Accent* [Brill's Studies in Indo-European Languages & Linguistics, Volume 17] (Brill 2017), 268 pp.

Balto-Slavic accentology is one of the most controversial and challenging fields in Indo-European studies. In addition to numerous accentual laws proposed during its long research history, the rise of at least two “accentological schools” alongside the traditional view (represented by de Saussure and Meillet, among others, and their followers)—that is, the Moscow School and the Leiden School—must be responsible for the controversy. One attempt that the author made in this book is to go beyond the controversy among these schools.

The author is an Indo-Europeanist with deep and thorough knowledge of many Indo-European branches; he is famous for his endeavor to draw a large-scale picture of the Indo-European verbal system (cf. *Hittite and Indo-European verb*. Cambridge University Press, 2003). In this book, he attempts to draw another large-scale picture of the shift of the prosodic system from Proto-Indo-European to Balto-Slavic. Some readers may be reminded of a similar attempt that was made by Thomas Olander (*Balto-Slavic accentual mobility*. De Gruyter, 2009), who operated using the “Mobility Law.” The approaches of these two authors are similar in that they both view the rise of mobility as a phonological process, not as a series of analogical processes nor as an inheritance of the PIE accentual system.

The book consists of seven chapters. Chapter 1 “The Indo-European Background” (pp. 1–30) presents an overview of the accent systems of PIE and its daughter languages, followed by a critical review of the generative approach. Chapter 2 “Balto-Slavic: The Descriptive Picture” (pp. 31–73) describes the synchronic accent systems of the Baltic and Slavic languages and their historical aspects characterized by the property of “acuteness” and accentual mobility, as well as introducing a concept of “left-marginal accent.” In Chapter 3 “The Origin of Acuteness” (pp. 74–103), defending the traditional view that the PIE long vowels became acute in Balto-Slavic, the author reaffirms his view that the Balto-Slavic contrast of acute vs. circumflex developed from an earlier contrast of long vs. “overlong” (Ṽ) vowels.

Chapter 4 “Mobility and Left-Marginal Accent” (pp. 104–130) finally reveals Jasanoff's framework as to how accentual mobility arose in Balto-Slavic. In fact, the “left-marginal accent,” or the non-lexical accent, introduced in Chapter 2, is a key concept to support the framework. It is defined as a non-lexical (falling) accent that a word received on its first syllable when it had no underlying marked accent (p. 55). Jasanoff hypothesizes that this accent historically resulted from the retraction module, Saussure-Pedersen's Law. If the retracted accent landed on the word-initial syllable, it was realized as a left-marginal accent (transcribed as Ṽ, e.g., PS *\*vōdō* ‘water’, corresponding to the traditional notation *\*vōdō* (c) and Olander's /,vodō/). The left-marginal accent was moved to the word-final position if the (phonological) word had four or more syllables (the advancement module, Proto-Vasil'ev-Dolobko's Law). These processes eventually gave rise to the Balto-Slavic accentual mobility in Jasanoff's framework. Olander (2009) proposed Mobility Law, by which a high tone on the final mora of a phonological word became low, producing an unaccented word. Unaccented words received a non-phonological ictus either on the initial or the final syllable, depending

on the number of enclitics. Both Jasanoff's and Olander's theories attempt to derive Balto-Slavic unaccented word forms from the original oxytone word forms. Long-standing difficulties with this topic still remain in both approaches, though.

Chapter 5 "Mobility in Nominal Forms" (pp. 131–179) and Chapter 6 "Mobility in the Verbs" (pp. 180–230) demonstrate how Jasanoff's theory predicts the attested data both in the nominal and verbal domains, which, however, serves as another testimony to the difficulty of this topic. For example, in order for Saussure-Pedersen's Law to operate on accusative case forms in *i*- and *u*-stem words, Jasanoff proposes the  $*\tilde{N}(C)$  retraction rule (p. 136), according to which a nasal in the coda position can be parsed as syllabic (e.g., PIE  $*suHnúm$  [-nú] > PBS  $*sūnun$  'sun (acc.sg.)' through Saussure-Pedersen's Law), as in Japanese. However, there is no supporting evidence for a syllabic treatment of nasals in the coda position from other IE branches or in other endings (such as [-oŋt] for the secondary ending 3pl.  $*-ónt$ ).

However, the most challenging category is the verbs, because most of the simple thematic barytone verbs somehow ended up as mobile verbs, and the correlation between PIE oxytonicity and Balto-Slavic mobility observed in the nominal domain is not observed in the verbs (p. 116). Chapter 6, where the verbs are treated in as much detail as nouns, therefore represents a remarkable advantage of this work. While Olander's (2009: 194–198) hypothesis starts with the *tudāti*-type verbs, Jasanoff proposes a more drastic hypothesis, that the Balto-Slavic mobile verbs developed from originally barytone verbs as follows: Jasanoff's modules first phonologically introduced the mobility to the prefixed forms of barytone verbs, and then the mobility spread to the simplex forms through analogy. However, we must say that both approaches leave numerous verbs in need of analogical explanations. The fact that Balto-Slavic accentual mobility is both historically and synchronically related to the lack of lexical accent (unaccentedness) may indicate another path. We could explore a third hypothesis, that the unaccented variants of the finite verbs played some role in the rise of the mobile verbs.

Chapters 5 and 6 also show Jasanoff's stance toward Moscow School concepts (pp. 174, 179, 211). "Valency" is a concept for Proto-Slavic suprasegmental morpho-phonemic features proposed by Dybo (*Slavianskaia aktsentologija: Opyt rekonstruktsii sistemy aktsentnykh paradigm v praslavianskom*. Nauka, 1981). Proto-Slavic morphemes were assigned with a valency either "dominant (+)" or "recessive (-)," whereby a dominant morpheme denotes a morpheme that attracts the accent, for example, the roots of AP (a), and a recessive morpheme is one that loses the accent to a dominant morpheme, for example, the roots of AP (c). Dybo further assumes that these properties can be traced back to Proto-Indo-European suprasegmental features, which Jasanoff strongly argues against, stating that valency is "[a] synchronic property of morphemes that emerged through the interaction of sound changes and analogy" (p. 211). This means that the framework of the valency does not constitute any satisfactory explanation for the historical problem of Balto-Slavic accentual mobility, which would represent the common opinion of those that adhere to the traditional view.

Chapter 7 "Summary" (pp. 231–234) summarizes the prosodic development from PIE to Proto-Balto-Slavic and its daughter languages in the framework. The main text of the book closes with "Appendix: Glossary of Terms" (pp. 235–237).

It is often said that accent has a demarcative function, which means that the accent signals a cue for the recognition of individual (phonological) words and their domains. Keeping this in mind, the history of the Balto-Slavic accent may appear similar to that

of the fluctuations of strategies for signaling word domains. In the proto-language, the word domain was not necessarily signaled by simply accenting the actual right or left edge of a word. Instead, the accent was associated with the ablaut patterns. However, it appears that in Proto-Balto-Slavic, the accent moved toward the right (Proto-Vasil'ev-Dolobko's Law) or left edge (Saussure-Pedersen's Law, also Olander's ictus assignment rule for either direction), involving analogical copying of some salient patterns, as the PIE ablaut system became more and more obsolete. It is thus an ambitious task for any linguist to describe the whole prehistory of this process. Yet, Jasanoff (as well as Olander 2009) made clear that the Balto-Slavic accentual mobility is a phonological process, and the oxytonicity in the parent language played a much more limited role in the rise of the mobility of verbs. Accentologists' investigations have not ended, but this book equips them with a better orientation.

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